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1993

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Published in American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. LXVII, No. 2 (1993), pp. 219-232. Copyright © 1993 American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly.
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Maimonides and Analogy

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Does the predication of a relation between two things imply that each of the relata have attributes predicable as well? In Volume I, Ch. 52 of *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Maimonides discusses this, and he seems to imply that it does. I will argue, using Aristotle's discussion of relativity as a predicate in Bk. 5, Ch. 15 of *Metaphysics*, that it does not, and I shall use this to discuss the consequent improved utility of an analogy Maimonides constructs between God and creatures in I.53. To do this, I shall need to recount a logic of analogy for Maimonides that he might initially contest, but given our improved picture of relativity, I think Maimonides would agree to its utility in the end.

It might be objected that there is no need for a logic of analogy in Maimonides's work; analogy is dismissed as a way to talk about God, and much of Volume I of the *Guide* is indeed an attempt to create a referential structure through which we can predicate about God. My project is not meant to supplant Maimonides's work; it is; rather, to augment it. If we can chart the great gulf between God and creatures by means of an analogy that Maimonides himself provides by clarifying it somewhat, on medieval Aristotelian grounds, perhaps the referential system that Maimonides constructs will itself be made clearer, even less perplexing.

Maimonides lists five types of attributes that we predicate of a subject: definitions, which encompass the whole of a subject's essence; parts of definitions, which refer to one or a number of the composite parts of a subject's essence; qualities, whether accidental or essential to the subject; relations, which tell us

about the subject with respect to how it stands with other objects; and actions, performed by the subject and "remote from the essence of the thing of which it is predicated."¹ Only actions can be predicated of God, because they imply no multiplicity in the actor, only that the actor has acted. H. A. Wolfson, in "The Aristotelian Predicables and Maimonides' Division of Attributes," explains that the predication of actions implies no potential to act in the subject, only the occurrence of the action. Whether the subject is able to repeat, alter, or forbear to act is not entailed by the predication because, in Arabic and Hebrew, no copula occurs in action predication.²

This is relevant to the discussion because it is inadmissible that God's essential nature be composite, God's essence is absolutely unified, pure Existence, and to add another attribute to this simplicity would be to eliminate his absolute unity. When we come to know a created substance, according to Aristotelian epistemology, we abstract from the perceived sense data of the object its form indicative of its essential nature. This is not to say that we remove the form or essential nature from the actual object; we reproduce the object's form and encompass it in our intellect. There we examine its composition, and can come to make attribute predications about it, defining it, partially or wholly, qualifying it, pointing out its relativity to other objects, and so forth. That the intellected object has existence is something apart from its nature, because all created being, by virtue of having been created, have been given their existence by another being already in existence. Thus, all created beings can be defined, and can be said to be in existence or not, thus making them composite.

Making a non-active attribution of God is thus impossible. How can anything be said about the divine actor, then? This negative theology necessitates that nothing can be said about God at all; all that we can talk about are his actions. We can know nothing, strictly speaking, about God's essence *per se*, because pure, necessary Existence cannot be encompassed in an intellect the existence of which is contingent in the way Aristotelian epistemology demands.

1 Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Vol. 1, trans. S. Pines, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), I, 52, 62a.

2 H. A. Wolfson, "The Aristotelian Predicables and Maimonides' Division of Attributes," *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 2:191-94.

Maimonides concludes, "He, may He be exalted, is one in all respects; no multiplicity should be posited in Him; there is no notion that is superadded to His essence; the numerous attributes possessing diverse notions that figure in the Scriptures and that are indicative of Him, may He be exalted, are mentioned in reference to the multiplicity of His actions and not because of a multiplicity subsisting in His essence ..."³ But must we be limited to actions in our predications of God? If we predicate definition, part of definition, or quality of God, says Maimonides, we either imply an anterior cause to God or multiplicity in His essence, neither of which is admissible. What if we predicate relation of God? Such a predication does not imply multiplicity or change predicable of the subject's essence, and so it looks at first glance as if this type of predication is admissible. But "there is no relation between God, may He be exalted, and time and place ..."⁴ And there is no correlation whatever, because all created substances are spatiotemporal. Moreover, God's existence is necessary, while creation's is contingent, further disallowing any sort of relation between the two. So while relation predications do not entail multiplicity or change predicable of the subject, they do entail that a relation between the subject and time, or a relation between the subject and place is predicable as an attribute of the subject. And since attribute predication implies that the subject is a "substratum of accidents," it is not possible for God, in whom there can be no such multiplicity.⁵ But must relation predications entail the predication of time or place of both relata? To work out the answer to this, we shall do best to explore Aristotle's thoughts on the matter, which are, after all, the basis for Maimonides's discussion.

3 I. 52. 60h.

4 Ibid.

5 I. 52. 59b. It might be objected that a tell-tale Newtonian view of time and place seems to have crept in here, but Maimonides gives these as his examples for this fourth possible type of attribute predication, explaining that both time and place predications are impossible of God. "For time is an accident attached to motion, when the notion of priority and posteriority is considered in the latter and when motion becomes numbered, as is made clear in the passages especially dealing with this subject. Motion, on the other hand, is one of the things attached to bodies, whereas God, may He be exalted, is not a body. Accordingly there is no relation between Him and time, and in the same way there is no relation between Him and place.", cf. I. 52. 60b. So anything which could have either temporality or location predicated of it has a multiplicity eliminating any possible correlativity between it and God. Later, in Vol. II, time is described as an accident consequent upon motion, which itself cannot exist save in time. See II. Intro. 3b, prop. 15.

In *Metaphysics* 5, Ch. 15, Aristotle discusses three ways things can be said to be relative, or three ways in which the predicate "related" can be made. His discussion appears in his philosophic lexicon, in which he outlines the proper use of such words as "quantity," "quality," "complete," and "limit." While being relative indicates that the subject has an attribute, is this attribute a quality? And does a relativity predicate always imply the existence of qualities predicable in both relata? Even such predicable attributes as location and temporality? There are three ways relativity can be predicated; let us examine each in turn. It will become obvious that Maimonides had the first two ways in mind, but the third is more problematic, and so will require more of our attention. Before we continue, however, we should pause to reestablish our bearings. We are not discussing relations, but rather, the predication of relativity. Certainly, for a predicate to be meaningful, it must be about something *in rebus*; the predication of relativity must be about the relativity of objects in the world. But does the predication of a relativity necessarily entail further attributes predicable of the subject? In the three sorts of relativity predication we are about to discuss, the first two entail a correspondent attribute predication about what the subject is relative to, while the third does not. If we can show that the relativity predicate " aRb " can entail nothing about " h ," in which " a " is created being and " h " is God, we shall have a means to expand on the analogy in Ch. 53.

The first kind of relativity is "spoken of with respect to numbers either without specification or in a definite way, whether in relation to themselves or to unity."⁶ The relation of double a specified unit to that specified unit is itself specifiable because it is twice a specified unit. More importantly, if John is "like" Bob with respect to weight, John and Bob share one predicable quality, a particular weight, which is as much as to say that they have at least one quality in common. How does "like" weight relate to the relation of doubles to unity? Say that at T1 John and Bob both weigh the same, 150 pounds. They are related to one another in their likeness with respect to their weights. Now say Bob contracts a wasting disease and loses exactly one-half his body weight. Now, at T2, John and Bob are related with respect to their weights as the whole is related to the half, and Bob's weight is specifiable at 75 pounds because he is in this relationship.

6 Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, (Grinnell, IA: Peripatetic Press, 1969), V, c. 14 (1020b32).

At its base, this relativity requires that the relata share a similar predicable attribute, whether it be definitive, partially definitive, qualitative, another relation, or an action. John and Bob might be alike with respect to their both being rational animals, or both having one quality in the same way, or they might both be fathers to their children. This first type of relativity requires that we know at least one thing about both relata, namely, in what respect they are alike. So this sort of relativity is rightfully dismissed as a way by which God and creatures can be related, given that, essentially, God can have no attributes.

What of the second type of relativity? "Things that can act and be acted upon are called 'relative' by virtue of a potency to act and a potency to be acted upon, and so are called the actualities of these potencies."⁷ Here predication of relativity entails predicable, correspondable qualities in both relata. These predicable qualities are "capacities." The best way to picture this sort of relativity is by thinking of a log and a flame. The flame is relative to the log by virtue of the capacity of the flame to burn the log, and the log is relative to the flame by virtue of its capacity to be consumed. They do not share similar attributes, but they have correspondable ones, in this case, qualities. Care must be taken, parenthetically, not to hypostatize this relativity; if we view the log and the flame's being related as (aRb) & (bRa), R must not be seen as something apart from the qualities of a and b. That is, if the relativity is curtailed by, say, a sudden rain dousing the fire, the relativity is only curtailed insofar as the capacities of the flame to burn and the log to be consumed are curtailed. The relativity of a parent to a child is the same, in that the parent has acted upon the child, and the child has been caused to be by the parent, by virtue of correspondable attributes in the parent and the child.

It might be objected that this sort of relativity can be brought to bear on the God-creation discussion, in that God acted, and creation has been acted upon, having been caused to be by God. Is this not the same sort of relativity as the parent-child relativity? No. God has necessary being, while creation has contingent being; these are not correspondable attributes in the way that the being of the parent and the being of the child are. Both the parent and the child have contingent being; they could "not be." God cannot "not be," while creation can, so we are not relying on correspondability of attributes in this case.⁸ Further, if we were able to make this sort of relativity predication of God and creatures, God would have a correspondable quality, entailed by the predication, which is inadmissible.

⁷ *Metaphysics* V, c. 15 (1021a8).

⁸ See I. 52. 60b-61a.

While both of these types of relativity entail some kind of attribute to the relata involved, the third type does not. "But the measurable or the knowable or the thinkable is said to be relative in the sense that something else is said to be related to it."⁹ But that something else is said to be relative to the knowable does not imply that the knowable is relative to something else. For example, I know my cat. That I bear the relation of knowing to my cat implies nothing about any quality or attribute predicable of my cat. That the cat is, in this discussion, "knowable," is so only insofar as I know it. The cat is not effected by my knowing it. But is not at least one attribute of the cat, by virtue of my knowing it, that it is "knowable"? By virtue of my knowing it, not only is it "knowable," it is known. Yet its "knowability" is entailed by its being known, and its being known is not an attribute predicable of the cat. Its being known is something that goes on inside of me. Aristotle says, "the thinkable signifies that a thought of it is possible; but the thought is not relative in the sense that it is stated as related to that of which it is the thought, for then the same thing would be stated twice."¹⁰ With this sort of relativity Aristotle envisions one of the relata, in this case, the knower, having an attribute, while the other relata, the known, is having nothing said of it, no attributes entailed by the relativity.

We should bear in mind that, for Aristotle, to know a thing is to abstract the form of the thing using the intellect, as described above. In an important sense, an abstraction theory of knowledge involves incorporating the form of the known into the folds of the knowing intellect, making the known a "part" of the knower. This will become especially important when applied to "knowing God"; the form of God certainly can not be abstracted in the usual way, because "knowing" God would involve "becoming" God.

Certainly Maimonides had the first two types of relativity in mind when he said that attributing a relation to two objects entails each of the relata having a particular attribute. But what of the third type? Oddly, Wolfson overlooks this. "In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle divides relation into three kinds, two of which necessary for our purpose here, are mentioned by him in his *Physics*."¹¹ "If He then goes on to describe the "numerical" and the "potency-act" relativity. I think Wolfson has missed the force of Maimonides's fail-safe attribution of location and temporality

9 *Metaphysics* V, c. 15 (1021a30).

10 *Metaphysics* V, c. 15 (1021a33).

11 Wolfson, p.183.

here. I suspect that Maimonides would hold that the third, “knowing” relativity entails that both relata are at least able to have time or location predicable, if nothing else. That is, my knowing my cat at bottom entails that the cat can have time or location predicated of it. To this, Aristotle would respond that it does nothing of the sort. “My cat” might well be a figment of my imagination. But does that not entail the possibility of the predication of being at a certain time?

Let us shift from my cat to knowing mathematical truth X. That I know X entails no predicability of time of X. When, or where, is a mathematical truth, given this medieval Aristotelian framework? That I know X entails nothing at all about X, not even its knowability. This is the force of the third type of relativity; it might be that what is relative to me by my knowing it has attributes, but my knowing it has nothing to do with any of them, if there happen to be any. In the third type of relativity, attributes are only entailed in one of the relata, not both. With this in mind, let us turn back to the *Guide*. At the end of Ch. 52, Maimonides says that only actions are predicable of God, that we can only know God through his actions, and that his essence is wholly closed to us. This is why relation cannot be predicated of him; predication of relations seems to entail predicable attributes of both relata. But how can many actions come from something completely unified, without multiplicity?

Maimonides illustrates how this can be in Ch. 53 with something strangely resembling an analogy. Consider, he says, the rational faculty in man. “It is one faculty with regard to which no multiplicity is posited.”¹² Through man’s rational faculty, humans are able to acquire science, arts, technical abilities, and political control. But all of these different actions proceed from one, unified faculty. In this sense, multiplicity can come from unity. “It accordingly should not be regarded as inadmissible in reference to God, may He be magnified and honored, that the diverse actions proceed from one simple essence in which no multiplicity is posited and to which no notion is superadded.”¹³ So the attribute of action can be predicated of God without implying anything about his essence. Otherwise it would be made composite; it would entail the attribution of an accident, a part, to God’s essence.¹⁴

12 I. 53. 63a.

13 Ibid.

14 See I. 51. 58b.

This is meant to be taken as an analogy, $a:b::c:d$, in which a is man's unified rational faculty, b is the many actions that come from it, c is God's unified essence, and d is God's actions. Let us explore this, beginning by postulating a logic of analogy for Maimonides. This will, on the face of it, appear contrary to Maimonides's approach, but given our clarification of relativity predication, this contrariety will vanish. In fact, I will argue, the analogy will be greatly strengthened, given Aristotle's description of the reliance of accident upon substance, to which Maimonides would surely assent.

First, it may seem misplaced to project a "logic of analogy" onto the rabbinic discourse of the *Guide*. Why should the arid logic of the philosophers play a part in explaining how biblical terms or parables reveal truth? Later in the first volume of the *Guide*, Maimonides uses his conclusions to refute the misguided approach of the Mutakallimun, who are guilty of misguided theology as well as of bad philosophy. "They follow the imagination and call it intellect." Maimonides is concerned with doing good philosophy here *qua* philosopher.¹⁵ The Mutakallimun would have us accept that, by virtue of being the form of created being, God is constantly renewing the being of every created substance in time. Rather than object to God as the form of creation,¹⁶ Maimonides rejects the idea of constant renewal of creation as detracting from God's perfect unity. But if Maimonides is willing to admit God to be the form of creation, he seems constrained to go against his refusal to admit of a relativity between creator and creation.

Thomas Aquinas provides an approach in the *Summa Theologicae* I. 13 that will help to resolve this Maimonidian dilemma. Indeed, just as Maimonides was occupied in correcting the theologically errant Mutakallimun in his *Guide*, Aquinas was similarly concerned in his early works against the Latin Averroists. If we can harvest the bounty of Aquinas's thought with regards to the predication of relativity as it is given in the *Summa Theologicae*, I believe Maimonides's project will be strengthened, while remaining true to his intent.

15 I. 71. 96a. See also 96b-97a, "For according to me the correct way, which is the method of demonstration about which there can be no doubt, is to establish the existence of the oneness of the deity ... through the methods of the philosophers ... because it is through this method that the demonstration becomes valid."

16 See I. 69. 90b, "God has, therefore, with reference to the world, the status of a form with regard to a thing possessing a form, in virtue of which it is what it is: a thing the true reality and essence of which are established by that form. Such is the relation of deity to the world."

According to Aquinas, Maimonides refuses to admit that anything at all can be known about God from creatures.¹⁷ In response to this refusal, Aquinas develops his logic of analogy, rooted in the unidirectional relation of creatures to God, the familiar third type of relativity described by Aristotle.¹⁸ As I will show, Aquinas's innovation only serves to augment Maimonides's position, saving him from such mishaps as the one described above.

The structure of analogy that I want to use involves there being some sort of relativity predicable between term a and term c. If a is to b in the same way that c is to d, then perhaps there are grounds for similarity between a and c. In Maimonides's analogy, man's unified rational faculty has a unity that might be in some sense similar to God's absolute unity. Why say that the diversity of God's actions coming from God's unity is like the diversity of man's actions coming from man's unified rational faculty if there is not some similarity between the two unities? Yet there can not be any similarity at all between God's unity and man's "unity"; "unity" in the first sense, God's, must refer to something different from "unity" in the second sense, man's unity, because man's unity is not absolute, and God's is.

In fact, Maimonides later admits that referring to man's "unified rational faculty" may have been premature. The acquired intellect might rather more accurately be comparable to God, for the rational faculty is "a faculty subsisting in a body and not separable from it, whereas God, may He be exalted, is not a faculty subsisting in the body of the world, but is separate from all parts of the world." And the acquired intellect " ... is not a faculty in the body but is truly separate from the organic body and overflows towards it."¹⁹

17 See *ST*, I, 13, 5: "Such a view is against the philosopher who proves many things about God ... Therefore it must be said that these names are said of God and creatures in an analogous sense, that is, according to proportion ... Hence whatever is said of God and creatures is said according as there is some relation of the creatures to God as to its principle and cause." From Anton Pegis, ed., *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1945), p. 120.

18 "Since, therefore, God is outside the whole order of creation, and all creatures are ordered to Him, and not conversely, it is manifest that creatures are really related to God Himself ... thus there is nothing to prevent such names, which import relation to the creature, from being predicated of God temporally, not by reason of change in Him, but by reason of the change in the nature ... " *ST*, I, 13,7.

19 1. 72. 104a-b.

But the nature of the acquired intellect is by no means certain, and Maimonides seems to want to avoid entering into the debate at this point.²⁰ At issue here is not whether the unified guiding principle of man, the acquired intellect, is part of man's "organic body," it is that the relation of creation to God, the unified "life of the world" as described in Chapter 69 is comparable to the relation of man's material being to the acquired intellect, the unified, non-material guiding principle of man. Problems later raised by confirmed monopsychists such as Aquinas do not apply here. If there were only one man, there would still be an acquired intellect of man, and the comparison would stand. What is at stake here is the unified guiding principle of man and its superiority to man's material being; that there is something about man that is in some sense unified compared to his material being is sufficient for the analogy to work.

In God there can be no composition, and thus "unity" refers to the pure Act of God's essence. In man, "unity" is only meant with his composite nature in mind. That is, man's intellect is "unity" only in comparison to his acts, which are manifold. The way to escape this dissimilarity, which certainly seems to lessen the force of the analogy, is to examine similarity. Is there a way that we can say that a and c are similar without getting caught up in the referential trap of "unity" meaning one thing when predicated of God and another when predicated of man?

Let us take a simpler example of an analogous statement as a starting point, "The smile on her face grew like a flower in a sunny meadow." This takes the form $a:b::c:d$, in which a is the smile, and b is its growth on her face, which are like c, the flower, and d, its growth in a sunny meadow. A kind of metaphorical proportionality is at work here. The growth of the smile on her face, and the joy it causes the beholder, is proportional in a poetic sort of way to the growth of a flower in a sunny meadow, and the joy it causes in the beholder. Something more is being communicated in the analogy than a statement about two things growing; a mood, a response, is being referred to in the a:b half of the analogy that is proportional

20 "However the case of the intellects of the heavens, that of the existence of separate intellects, and that of the representation of the acquired intellect, which is also separate, are matters open to speculation and research." (Ibid.) Maimonides is interested in developing his comparison introduced in Ch. 53, in which God, the "life of the world" and the directive force behind the first part of being, which directs all lesser being, is likened to man's unified rational faculty, more correctly the acquired intellect, which is the directive force behind man's soul, which directs man's material being.

in some way to a mood or response evoked by the c:d half. So when the beholder sees the smile growing, the response is similar to beholding the flower growing. The smile and the flower have a metaphorical proportionality as a result, which is the basis for saying that they are like each other.

Is this the sort of analogy that Maimonides envisions? It does not seem like it, because God's unity is nothing like man's unity, while the smile and the flower are able to have time or location predicated of them, even if all other similarities are metaphorical.

Before we rule out an analogy based on proportionality, we should investigate proportionality. This sort of analogy seems to require that both analogates have something "in common," but is "that they are proportionate" enough of an explanation of what they have in common? The immediate question that arises is, how are they proportionate? It must be that each of the two proportional subjects have some attribute that admits of correspondability in the other, whether the comparable attributes are definitional, partially definitional, qualitative, relational, or act.

It appears that correspondability would be prior to proportionality on a logical level, at least; whether or not ontological priority is possible will be discussed below. Two attributes can certainly be correspondable without being proportional, because proportionality appears to require some sort of quantification judgment of the attributes involved, while correspondability does not. Take the burning log example. The "able to burn" attribute of the fire is correspondable to the "able to be burned" attribute of the log without having to quantify either attribute; we do not ask, "how able is the fire to burn the log?" At this level, we ask, "is the fire able to burn the log?" Given Aristotle's second type of relativity predicable, it would seem that any subject of which this relativity is predicable would have to have a correspondability of attributes, but whether the attributes are proportional or not does not enter into things.

Aristotle's first kind of relativity predicable seems to require a proportionality as well as a correspondability of attributes, because this sort of relativity rests on a quantification judgment involving two correspondable attributes predicable in two objects, as has been discussed. Can the proportional attributes entailed by this sort of relativity predication not be correspondable? It does not seem so. That they are proportional seems to entail a correspondability. So, on a logical level

at least, proportionality of attributes seems necessarily to entail a concomitant correspondability, while correspondability of attributes does not necessarily entail a concomitant proportionality.

But now we have shifted our explanation to this correspondability of attributes; is correspondability something that carries ontological weight? I suspect that, for Aristotle, neither proportionality nor correspondability would be ontological entities in the same way that attributes are; both seem to be "attributes of attributes."

Let us follow this out. Say that Jim's hair is twice as lustrous as Bob's is. Here we have a proportionality of 2/1; for every "unit of lustre" in Bob's hair, we can expect two "units" in Jim's. That Bob's and Jim's hair are correspondable with respect to lustre is certain, and this proportionality of 2/1 describes the correspondence. Now the lustre of Bob's and Jim's hair is an accidental quality of their hair, for their hair would certainly remain their hair if they were to switch to some cheaper brand of shampoo that leaves hair dull and lifeless. So that Jim's hair is twice as lustrous as Bob's seems to be an attribute of an accidental quality of Jim and Bob, or an attribute of an attribute. What if we continue, and say that "Jim's hair is twice as lustrous as Bob's" is proportional to "Jim's teeth are twice as lustrous as Bob's"? Here we have a proportionality set up between attributes of attributes; do we have an attribute of an attribute of an attribute? We would if we were to say that proportionality is an attribute, and we would open ourselves up to a potentially infinite regress of ontologically weighty attributes. The same seems to hold with correspondability, for correspondability appears to be entailed by proportionality.

For simplicity's sake, I think it best to exclude correspond ability and proportionality from the realm of ontological attributes, if only to avoid the regress described. So what is proportionality? It might be a kind of metaphor. Let us assume that a metaphor is an illustration of something, using some kind of abbreviation, with the abbreviation artificially standing for some state of affairs or predicability. The abbreviation in this case is the proportionality, and since proportionality is not something ontologically present *in rebus*, the proportionality artificially signifies a quantifiable correspondability of attributes (which would make it a metaphor of a metaphor, if correspondability itself is not ontologically present *in rebus*.)

So an analogy based on proportionality can only work if the analogates are proportional, which is to say, if the analogates have correspondable attributes. If the analogates have no correspondable attributes, then there cannot be any proportionality between them. This is the case with God and creatures, because God and creatures can have no correspondable attributes. What of the attribute of action? God can only have that predicated of him in the equivocal way Maimonides describes in the *Guide*, which makes his actions not correspondable with creatures in the sense we need for proportionality.

So must we abandon our attempt to make analogates a and c “similar”? If we were constrained by Maimonides’s picture of relativity, we would have to, leaving the analogy to tell us only about how multiplicity can come from unity, with unity having two different referents, one for each analogate. But with our improved version of relativity, in which X can be relative to Y without saying anything at all about Y’s attributes, we will be able to strengthen the analogy.

Can we say that relativity is predicable of creatures to God in the same way that relativity is predicable of the knower to the known? Nothing is entailed about God, just as nothing is entailed about the known in such a relativity predication. The being of the known is in no way affected by the fact that it is known, but the being of the knower, *qua* knower, is certainly changed by the fact that it knows the known. If the known were in some way erased from the relativity predication, the being of the knower, *qua* knower, would also vanish. But if the being of the knower were eliminated from the relativity predication, the being of the known would be unaffected, because it remains unaffected throughout the relativity. That which is unchanged by being known certainly cannot suddenly be changed by ceasing to be known. The same seems to hold for the relativity predicable of creatures to God. God is “similar” to the known in this case, not because he is known, of course, but because God remains unchanged by the relativity predicable of creatures to him. If God were in some way erased from the relativity predication, creatures would surely be affected, because their being is contingent upon his necessary being. But if creatures were erased from the relativity predication, God would remain unchanged, because his necessary being is, by definition, not contingent upon another.

In what way is relativity predicable of creatures relative to God? Because all creatures have contingent being, in that they could “not be,” they have a reliance upon God’s necessary being, because he can not “not be.” Is this Maimonides’s idea? He as much as says that it is only through God’s being that creation has being in Ch. 72.²¹ But of course he cannot actually say that relativity is predicable of contingent being to necessary being, because of the strictures he applied in Ch. 52. Now that we have loosened these bonds, the passage in Ch. 72 has more force. What can we do with the analogy of Ch. 53 now? The major analogates, God’s unity and man’s unity, can be said to be predicably relative, though “disproportionate,” meaning that there can be no correspondability of attributes between the two, because no attributes of God are available to us with regard to his unity. If we can find a similar relativity predicable between two other relata, perhaps the analogy can tell us more than how multiplicity can come from unity.

Consider the disproportionality between the being of substance and the being of accident.²² When substance is seen as a thing in the world, it is a “being in itself.” Aside from its anterior cause, through which it came into existence, the substance is an independent thing. It requires the being of no other thing for its continued substantial being. A simple stone, for example, after having come into being through sedimentation, or volcanic explosion, requires nothing else for its continued existence as a stone. But mottled pattern on the stone requires the stone’s continued existence for its own existence. The stone does not need this mottled pattern for its own continued existence; another mottled pattern would do just as well, as would a striped pattern, or no pattern at all. But this mottled pattern has accidental being, or “being in another.”

21 “In the same way there exists in being (Le., contingent being) something that rules it as a whole and puts into motion its first principal part ... For it is in virtue of this thing that the existence of the sphere (Le., the firmament, or the Universe), and every part of it endures. This thing is the deity, may Its name be exalted.” I. 72. 103b.

22 *Categories*, c. 5 (2b1, 2b10, 4a10), on the centrality of substance, especially 2b1, 2b10, 4a10; *Metaphysics* V, c 7 (1017a19), sense of “accidental being”; V, c. 8 (1017b10-25), what is meant by “substance”; V, c. 30 (1025a13-20), what is meant by “accident”; VI, c. 2-4 (1026b5-1027b28) for absolute reliance of “accidental” on “substantial” being.

Two sorts of being are evident in any substantial thing in the world, then: the substantial being of the object, and the being of the accidents that inhere in the substance, or “being in itself” and “being in another.” Is relativity predicable of accidental being to substantial being in the sense that relativity is predicable of man’s unity to God’s unity? While it may appear that some subtle shift has been made from unity-to being-predication, no shift has been made. The focus of this question is whether “unity” relativity is the same kind of relativity as “being” relativity. It may help to remember that man’s unity being composite entails a contingent being, in that man’s essence is “given” existence from something already existing, while God’s unity entails necessary being because his essence is pure Existence, though. The disproportionalities certainly seem to be of the same type, with the former being absolutely dependent on the being of the latter, while the being of the latter is essentially unchanged by the being of the former.

But this is not to say that any time you have an ordered pair (a, b), in which a has “being in itself” and b has “being in another,” that you have this relativity predicable. If this were the case, any ordered pair could be said to be disproportionate and thus able to have this relativity predicated of it. Take, for example, the ordered pair (U.S.S. Lexington, the red of my beard). The Lexington is an artifice substance, thus, a “being in itself,” not reliant on the being of anything else for its own continued existence. But the red of my beard needs my beard for its existence; it is accidental “being in another,” and cannot be without the substantial being of my beard, and ultimately, me. This ordered pair exhibits the requisite disproportionality, but the predicable ontological grounds for the kind of relativity we are discussing just is not there. These ontological grounds for relativity predication seem necessary, and if they are present, the requisite disproportionality entailed will also be. It appears to be the case that ontological grounds for this relativity predication are present between accidental and substantial being, and so they are disproportionate in the same way that the contingent being of creatures is disproportionate to the necessary being of God.

My contention, then, is that every time we run across a relativity predicate of this sort, we will have a commensurate disproportionality entailed as well. And each correctly reached relative disproportionality will be able to be compared to the commensurate relative disproportionality of terms a and c in Maimonides’s analogy, thus delineating the gulf between the being of God and the being of creatures, without saying anything about God’s essence.

Maimonides and Analogy

by Stephen E. Lahey

Does the predication of a relation between two things imply that each of the relata have attributes predicable as well? In Volume I, Ch. 52 of *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Maimonides discusses this, and he seems to imply that it does. I will argue, using Aristotle's discussion of relativity as a predicate in Bk. 5, Ch. 15 of *Metaphysics*, that it does not, and I shall use this to discuss the consequent improved utility of an analogy Maimonides constructs between God and creatures in I.53. To do this, I shall need to recount a logic of analogy for Maimonides that he might initially contest, but given our improved picture of relativity, I think Maimonides would agree to its utility in the end.

It might be objected that there is no need for a logic of analogy in Maimonides's work; analogy is dismissed as a way to talk about God, and much of Volume I of the *Guide* is indeed an attempt to create a referential structure through which we can predicate about God. My project is not meant to supplant Maimonides's work; it is, rather, to augment it. If we can chart the great gulf between God and creatures by means of an analogy that Maimonides himself provides by clarifying it somewhat, on medieval Aristotelian grounds, perhaps the referential system that Maimonides constructs will itself be made clearer, even less perplexing.

Maimonides lists five types of attributes that we predicate of a subject: definitions, which encompass the whole of a subject's essence; parts of definitions, which refer to one or a number of the composite parts of a subject's essence; qualities, whether accidental or essential to the subject; relations, which tell us about the subject with respect to how it stands with other objects; and actions, performed by the subject and "remote from the essence of the thing of which it is predicated."¹ Only actions can be predicated of God, because they imply no multiplic-

¹ Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Vol.1, trans. S. Pines, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), I, 52, 62a.

ity in the actor, only that the actor has acted. H. A. Wolfson, in "The Aristotelian Predicables and Maimonides' Division of Attributes," explains that the predication of actions implies no potential to act in the subject, only the occurrence of the action. Whether the subject is able to repeat, alter, or forbear to act is not entailed by the predication, because, in Arabic and Hebrew, no copula occurs in action predication.²

This is relevant to the discussion because it is inadmissible that God's essential nature be composite, God's essence is absolutely unified, pure Existence, and to add another attribute to this simplicity would be to eliminate his absolute unity. When we come to know a created substance, according to Aristotelian epistemology, we abstract from the perceived sense data of the object its form indicative of its essential nature. This is not to say that we remove the form or essential nature from the actual object; we reproduce the object's form and encompass it in our intellect. There we examine its composition, and can come to make attribute predications about it, defining it, partially or wholly, qualifying it, pointing out its relativity to other objects, and so forth. That the intellected object has existence is something apart from its nature, because all created being, by virtue of having been created, have been given their existence by another being already in existence. Thus, all created beings can be defined, and can be said to be in existence or not, thus making them composite.

Making a non-active attribution of God is thus impossible. How can anything be said about the divine actor, then? This negative theology necessitates that nothing can be said about God at all; all that we can talk about are his actions. We can know nothing, strictly speaking, about God's essence *per se*, because pure, necessary Existence cannot be encompassed in an intellect the existence of which is contingent in the way Aristotelian epistemology demands.

Maimonides concludes, "He, may He be exalted, is one in all respects; no multiplicity should be posited in Him; there is no notion that is superadded to His essence; the numerous attributes possessing diverse notions that figure in the Scriptures and that are indicative of Him, may He be exalted, are mentioned in reference to the multiplicity of His actions and not because of a multiplicity subsisting in His essence. . . ."³

But must we be limited to actions in our predications of God? If we predicate definition, part of definition, or quality of God, says Maimonides, we either imply an anterior cause to God or multiplicity in His essence, neither of which is admissible. What if we predicate relation of God? Such a predication does not imply multiplicity or change predicable of the subject's essence, and so it looks at first glance as if

² H. A. Wolfson, "The Aristotelian Predicables and Maimonides' Division of Attributes," *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 2: 191-94.

³ I.52.60b.

this type of predication is admissible. But "there is no relation between God, may He be exalted, and time and place . . ."⁴ And there is no correlation whatever, because all created substances are spatiotemporal. Moreover, God's existence is necessary, while creation's is contingent, further disallowing any sort of relation between the two.

So while relation predications do not entail multiplicity or change predicable of the subject, they do entail that a relation between the subject and time, or a relation between the subject and place is predicable as an attribute of the subject. And since attribute predication implies that the subject is a "substratum of accidents," it is not possible for God, in whom there can be no such multiplicity.⁵ But must relation predications entail the predication of time or place of both relata? To work out the answer to this, we shall do best to explore Aristotle's thoughts on the matter, which are, after all, the basis for Maimonides's discussion.

In *Metaphysics* 5, Ch. 15, Aristotle discusses three ways things can be said to be relative, or three ways in which the predicate "related" can be made. His discussion appears in his philosophic lexicon, in which he outlines the proper use of such words as "quantity," "quality," "complete," and "limit." While being relative indicates that the subject has an attribute, is this attribute a quality? And does a relativity predicate always imply the existence of qualities predicable in both relata? Even such predicable attributes as location and temporality? There are three ways relativity can be predicated; let us examine each in turn. It will become obvious that Maimonides had the first two ways in mind, but the third is more problematic, and so will require more of our attention.

Before we continue, however, we should pause to reestablish our bearings. We are not discussing relations, but rather, the predication of relativity. Certainly, for a predicate to be meaningful, it must be about something *in rebus*; the predication of relativity must be about the relativity of objects in the world. But does the predication of a relativity

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ I. 52. 59b. It might be objected that a tell-tale Newtonian view of time and place seems to have crept in here, but Maimonides gives these as his examples for this fourth possible type of attribute predication, explaining that both time and place predications are impossible of God. "For time is an accident attached to motion, when the notion of priority and posteriority is considered in the latter and when motion becomes numbered, as is made clear in the passages especially dealing with this subject. Motion, on the other hand, is one of the things attached to bodies, whereas God, may He be exalted, is not a body. Accordingly there is no relation between Him and time, and in the same way there is no relation between Him and place," cf. I. 52. 60b. So anything which could have either temporality or location predicated of it has a multiplicity eliminating any possible correlativity between it and God. Later, in Vol. II, time is described as an accident consequent upon motion, which itself cannot exist save in time. See II. Intro. 3b, prop. 15.

necessarily entail further attributes predicable of the subject? In the three sorts of relativity predication we are about to discuss, the first two entail a correspondent attribute predication about what the subject is relative to, while the third does not. If we can show that the relativity predicate "aRb" can entail nothing about "b," in which "a" is created being and "b" is God, we shall have a means to expand on the analogy in Ch. 53.

The first kind of relativity is "spoken of with respect to numbers either without specification or in a definite way, whether in relation to themselves or to unity."⁶ The relation of double a specified unit to that specified unit is itself specifiable because it is twice a specified unit. More importantly, if John is "like" Bob with respect to weight, John and Bob share one predicable quality, a particular weight, which is as much as to say that they have at least one quality in common. How does "like" weight relate to the relation of doubles to unity? Say that at T1 John and Bob both weigh the same, 150 pounds. They are related to one another in their likeness with respect to their weights. Now say Bob contracts a wasting disease and loses exactly one-half his body weight. Now, at T2, John and Bob are related with respect to their weights as the whole is related to the half, and Bob's weight is specifiable at 75 pounds because he is in this relationship.

At its base, this relativity requires that the relata share a similar predicable attribute, whether it be definitive, partially definitive, qualitative, another relation, or an action. John and Bob might be alike with respect to their both being rational animals, or both having one quality in the same way, or they might both be fathers to their children. This first type of relativity requires that we know at least one thing about both relata, namely, in what respect they are alike. So this sort of relativity is rightfully dismissed as a way by which God and creatures can be related, given that, essentially, God can have no attributes.

What of the second type of relativity? "Things that can act and be acted upon are called 'relative' by virtue of a potency to act and a potency to be acted upon, and so are called the actualities of these potencies."⁷ Here predication of relativity entails predicable, correspondable qualities in both relata. These predicable qualities are "capacities." The best way to picture this sort of relativity is by thinking of a log and a flame. The flame is relative to the log by virtue of the capacity of the flame to burn the log, and the log is relative to the flame by virtue of its capacity to be consumed. They do not share similar attributes, but they have correspondable ones, in this case, qualities. Care must be taken, parenthetically, not to hypostatize this relativity; if we view the log and the

⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, (Grinnell, IA: Peripatetic Press, 1969), V, c. 14 (1020b32).

⁷ *Metaphysics* V, c. 15 (1021a8).

flame's being related as (aRb) & (bRa), R must not be seen as something apart from the qualities of a and b. That is, if the relativity is curtailed by, say, a sudden rain dousing the fire, the relativity is only curtailed insofar as the capacities of the flame to burn and the log to be consumed are curtailed. The relativity of a parent to a child is the same, in that the parent has acted upon the child, and the child has been caused to be by the parent, by virtue of correspondable attributes in the parent and the child.

It might be objected that this sort of relativity can be brought to bear on the God-creation discussion, in that God acted, and creation has been acted upon, having been caused to be by God. Is this not the same sort of relativity as the parent-child relativity? No. God has necessary being, while creation has contingent being; these are not correspondable attributes in the way that the being of the parent and the being of the child are. Both the parent and the child have contingent being; they could "not be." God cannot "not be," while creation can, so we are not relying on correspondability of attributes in this case.⁸ Further, if we were able to make this sort of relativity predication of God and creatures, God would have a correspondable quality, entailed by the predication, which is inadmissible.

While both of these types of relativity entail some kind of attribute to the relata involved, the third type does not. "But the measurable or the knowable or the thinkable is said to be relative in the sense that something else is said to be related to it."⁹ But that something else is said to be relative to the knowable does not imply that the knowable is relative to something else. For example, I know my cat. That I bear the relation of knowing to my cat implies nothing about any quality or attribute predicable of my cat. That the cat is, in this discussion, "knowable," is so only insofar as I know it. The cat is not effected by my knowing it. But is not at least one attribute of the cat, by virtue of my knowing it, that it is "knowable"? By virtue of my knowing it, not only is it "knowable," it is known. Yet its "knowability" is entailed by its being known, and its being known is not an attribute predicable of the cat. Its being known is something that goes on inside of me. Aristotle says, "the thinkable signifies that a thought of it is possible; but the thought is not relative in the sense that it is stated as related to that of which it is the thought, for then the same thing would be stated twice."¹⁰ With this sort of relativity Aristotle envisions one of the relata, in this case, the

⁸ See I. 52. 60b-61a.

⁹ *Metaphysics* V, c. 15 (1021a30).

¹⁰ *Metaphysics* V, c. 15 (1021a33).

knower, having an attribute, while the other relata, the known, is having nothing said of it, no attributes entailed by the relativity.

We should bear in mind that, for Aristotle, to know a thing is to abstract the form of the thing using the intellect, as described above. In an important sense, an abstraction theory of knowledge involves incorporating the form of the known into the folds of the knowing intellect, making the known a "part" of the knower. This will become especially important when applied to "knowing God"; the form of God certainly can not be abstracted in the usual way, because "knowing" God would involve "becoming" God.

Certainly Maimonides had the first two types of relativity in mind when he said that attributing a relation to two objects entails each of the relata having a particular attribute. But what of the third type? Oddly, Wolfson overlooks this. "In his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle divides relation into three kinds, two of which, necessary for our purpose here, are mentioned by him in his *Physics*."¹¹ He then goes on to describe the "numerical" and the "potency-act" relativity. I think Wolfson has missed the force of Maimonides's fail-safe attribution of location and temporality here. I suspect that Maimonides would hold that the third, "knowing" relativity entails that both relata are at least able to have time or location predicable, if nothing else. That is, my knowing my cat at bottom entails that the cat can have time or location predicated of it. To this, Aristotle would respond that it does nothing of the sort. "My cat" might well be a figment of my imagination. But does that not entail the possibility of the predication of being at a certain time?

Let us shift from my cat to knowing mathematical truth X. That I know X entails no predicability of time of X. When, or where, is a mathematical truth, given this medieval Aristotelian framework? That I know X entails nothing at all about X, not even its knowability. This is the force of the third type of relativity; it might be that what is relative to me by my knowing it has attributes, but my knowing it has nothing to do with any of them, if there happen to be any. In the third type of relativity, attributes are only entailed in one of the relata, not both.

With this in mind, let us turn back to the *Guide*. At the end of Ch. 52, Maimonides says that only actions are predicable of God, that we can only know God through his actions, and that his essence is wholly closed to us. This is why relation cannot be predicated of him; predication of relations seems to entail predicable attributes of both relata. But how can many actions come from something completely unified, without multiplicity?

Maimonides illustrates how this can be in Ch. 53 with something strangely resembling an analogy. Consider, he says, the rational faculty in man. "It is one faculty with regard to which no multiplicity is

¹¹ Wolfson, p.183.

posited."¹² Through man's rational faculty, humans are able to acquire science, arts, technical abilities, and political control. But all of these different actions proceed from one, unified faculty. In this sense, multiplicity can come from unity. "It accordingly should not be regarded as inadmissible in reference to God, may He be magnified and honored, that the diverse actions proceed from one simple essence in which no multiplicity is posited and to which no notion is superadded."¹³ So the attribute of action can be predicated of God without implying anything about his essence. Otherwise it would be made composite; it would entail the attribution of an accident, a part, to God's essence.¹⁴

This is meant to be taken as an analogy, a:b::c:d, in which a is man's unified rational faculty, b is the many actions that come from it, c is God's unified essence, and d is God's actions. Let us explore this, beginning by postulating a logic of analogy for Maimonides. This will, on the face of it, appear contrary to Maimonides's approach, but given our clarification of relativity predication, this contrariety will vanish. In fact, I will argue, the analogy will be greatly strengthened, given Aristotle's description of the reliance of accident upon substance, to which Maimonides would surely assent.

First, it may seem misplaced to project a "logic of analogy" onto the rabbinic discourse of the *Guide*. Why should the arid logic of the philosophers play a part in explaining how biblical terms or parables reveal truth? Later in the first volume of the *Guide*, Maimonides uses his conclusions to refute the misguided approach of the Mutakallimun, who are guilty of misguided theology as well as of bad philosophy. "They follow the imagination and call it intellect." Maimonides is concerned with doing good philosophy here *qua* philosopher.¹⁵ The Mutakallimun would have us accept that, by virtue of being the form of created being, God is constantly renewing the being of every created substance in time. Rather than object to God as the form of creation,¹⁶ Maimonides rejects the idea of constant renewal of creation as detracting from God's perfect unity. But if Maimonides is willing to admit God to be the form of

¹²I. 53. 63a.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴See I. 51. 58b.

¹⁵I. 71. 96a. See also 96b-97a, "For according to me the correct way, which is the method of demonstration about which there can be no doubt, is to establish the existence of the oneness of the deity . . . through the methods of the philosophers . . . because it is through this method that the demonstration becomes valid."

¹⁶See I. 69. 90b, "God has, therefore, with reference to the world, the status of a form with regard to a thing possessing a form, in virtue of which it is what it is: a thing the true reality and essence of which are established by that form. Such is the relation of deity to the world."

creation, he seems constrained to go against his refusal to admit of a relativity between creator and creation.

Thomas Aquinas provides an approach in the *Summa Theologicae* I. 13 that will help to resolve this Maimonidian dilemma. Indeed, just as Maimonides was occupied in correcting the theologically errant Mutakallimun in his *Guide*, Aquinas was similarly concerned in his early works against the Latin Averroists. If we can harvest the bounty of Aquinas's thought with regards to the predication of relativity as it is given in the *Summa Theologicae*, I believe Maimonides's project will be strengthened, while remaining true to his intent.

According to Aquinas, Maimonides refuses to admit that anything at all can be known about God from creatures¹⁷ In response to this refusal, Aquinas develops his logic of analogy, rooted in the unidirectional relation of creatures to God, the familiar third type of relativity described by Aristotle.¹⁸ As I will show, Aquinas's innovation only serves to augment Maimonides's position, saving him from such mishaps as the one described above.

The structure of analogy that I want to use involves there being some sort of relativity predicable between term a and term c. If a is to b in the same way that c is to d, then perhaps there are grounds for similarity between a and c. In Maimonides's analogy, man's unified rational faculty has a unity that might be in some sense similar to God's absolute unity. Why say that the diversity of God's actions coming from God's unity is like the diversity of man's actions coming from man's unified rational faculty if there is not some similarity between the two unities? Yet there can not be any similarity at all between God's unity and man's "unity"; "unity" in the first sense, God's, must refer to something different from "unity" in the second sense, man's unity, because man's unity is not absolute, and God's is.

In fact, Maimonides later admits that referring to man's "unified rational faculty" may have been premature. The acquired intellect might rather more accurately be comparable to God, for the rational faculty is "a faculty subsisting in a body and not separable from it,

¹⁷ See *ST*, I, 13, 5: "Such a view is against the philosopher who proves many things about God . . . Therefore it must be said that these names are said of God and creatures in an analogous sense, that is, according to proportion . . . Hence whatever is said of God and creatures is said according as there is some relation of the creatures to God as to its principle and cause." From Anton Pegis, ed., *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1945), p. 120.

¹⁸ "Since, therefore, God is outside the whole order of creation, and all creatures are ordered to Him, and not conversely, it is manifest that creatures are really related to God Himself . . . thus there is nothing to prevent such names, which import relation to the creature, from being predicated of God temporally, not by reason of change in Him, but by reason of the change in the nature . . ." *ST*, I, 13, 7.

whereas God, may He be exalted, is not a faculty subsisting in the body of the world, but is separate from all parts of the world." And the acquired intellect "... is not a faculty in the body but is truly separate from the organic body and overflows towards it."¹⁹

But the nature of the acquired intellect is by no means certain, and Maimonides seems to want to avoid entering into the debate at this point.²⁰ At issue here is not whether the unified guiding principle of man, the acquired intellect, is part of man's "organic body," it is that the relation of creation to God, the unified "life of the world" as described in Chapter 69 is comparable to the relation of man's material being to the acquired intellect, the unified, non-material guiding principle of man. Problems later raised by confirmed monopsychists such as Aquinas do not apply here. If there were only one man, there would still be an acquired intellect of man, and the comparison would stand. What is at stake here is the unified guiding principle of man and its superiority to man's material being; that there is something about man that is in some sense unified compared to his material being is sufficient for the analogy to work.

In God there can be no composition, and thus "unity" refers to the pure Act of God's essence. In man, "unity" is only meant with his composite nature in mind. That is, man's intellect is "unity" only in comparison to his acts, which are manifold. The way to escape this dissimilarity, which certainly seems to lessen the force of the analogy, is to examine similarity. Is there a way that we can say that a and c are similar without getting caught up in the referential trap of "unity" meaning one thing when predicated of God and another when predicated of man?

Let us take a simpler example of an analogous statement as a starting point, "The smile on her face grew like a flower in a sunny meadow." This takes the form a:b::c:d, in which a is the smile, and b is its growth on her face, which are like c, the flower, and d, its growth in a sunny meadow. A kind of metaphorical proportionality is at work here. The growth of the smile on her face, and the joy it causes the beholder, is proportional in a poetic sort of way to the growth of a flower in a sunny meadow, and the joy it causes in the beholder. Something more is being communicated in the analogy than a statement about two things grow-

¹⁹I. 72. 104a-b.

²⁰"However the case of the intellects of the heavens, that of the existence of separate intellects, and that of the representation of the acquired intellect, which is also separate, are matters open to speculation and research." (Ibid.) Maimonides is interested in developing his comparison introduced in Ch. 53, in which God, the "life of the world" and the directive force behind the first part of being, which directs all lesser being, is likened to man's unified rational faculty, more correctly the acquired intellect, which is the directive force behind man's soul, which directs man's material being.

ing; a mood, a response, is being referred to in the a:b half of the analogy that is proportional in some way to a mood or response evoked by the c:d half. So when the beholder sees the smile growing, the response is similar to beholding the flower growing. The smile and the flower have a metaphorical proportionality as a result, which is the basis for saying that they are like each other.

Is this the sort of analogy that Maimonides envisions? It does not seem like it, because God's unity is nothing like man's unity, while the smile and the flower are able to have time or location predicated of them, even if all other similarities are metaphorical.

Before we rule out an analogy based on proportionality, we should investigate proportionality. This sort of analogy seems to require that both analogates have something "in common," but is "that they are proportionate" enough of an explanation of what they have in common? The immediate question that arises is, how are they proportionate? It must be that each of the two proportional subjects have some attribute that admits of correspondability in the other, whether the comparable attributes are definitional, partially definitional, qualitative, relational, or act.

It appears that correspondability would be prior to proportionality on a logical level, at least; whether or not ontological priority is possible will be discussed below. Two attributes can certainly be correspondable without being proportional, because proportionality appears to require some sort of quantification judgement of the attributes involved, while correspondability does not. Take the burning log example. The "able to burn" attribute of the fire is correspondable to the "able to be burned" attribute of the log without having to quantify either attribute; we do not ask, "how able is the fire to burn the log?" At this level, we ask, "is the fire able to burn the log?" Given Aristotle's second type of relativity predicable, it would seem that any subject of which this relativity is predicable would have to have a correspondability of attributes, but whether the attributes are proportional or not does not enter into things.

Aristotle's first kind of relativity predicable seems to require a proportionality as well as a correspondability of attributes, because this sort of relativity rests on a quantification judgement involving two correspondable attributes predicable in two objects, as has been discussed. Can the proportional attributes entailed by this sort of relativity predication not be correspondable? It does not seem so. That they are proportional seems to entail a correspondability. So, on a logical level at least, proportionality of attributes seems necessarily to entail a concomitant correspondability, while correspondability of attributes does not necessarily entail a concomitant proportionality.

But now we have shifted our explanation to this correspondability of attributes; is correspondability something that carries ontological weight? I suspect that, for Aristotle, neither proportionality nor corre-

spondability would be ontological entities in the same way that attributes are; both seem to be "attributes of attributes."

Let us follow this out. Say that Jim's hair is twice as lustrous as Bob's is. Here we have a proportionality of 2/1; for every "unit of lustre" in Bob's hair, we can expect two "units" in Jim's. That Bob's and Jim's hair are correspondable with respect to lustre is certain, and this proportionality of 2/1 describes the correspondence. Now the lustre of Bob's and Jim's hair is an accidental quality of their hair, for their hair would certainly remain their hair if they were to switch to some cheaper brand of shampoo that leaves hair dull and lifeless. So that Jim's hair is twice as lustrous as Bob's seems to be an attribute of an accidental quality of Jim and Bob, or an attribute of an attribute. What if we continue, and say that "Jim's hair is twice as lustrous as Bob's" is proportional to "Jim's teeth are twice as lustrous as Bob's"? Here we have a proportionality set up between attributes of attributes; do we have an attribute of an attribute of an attribute? We would if we were to say that proportionality is an attribute, and we would open ourselves up to a potentially infinite regress of ontologically weighty attributes. The same seems to hold with correspondability, for correspondability appears to be entailed by proportionality.

For simplicity's sake, I think it best to exclude correspondability and proportionality from the realm of ontological attributes, if only to avoid the regress described. So what is proportionality? It might be a kind of metaphor. Let us assume that a metaphor is an illustration of something, using some kind of abbreviation, with the abbreviation artificially standing for some state of affairs or predicability. The abbreviation in this case is the proportionality, and since proportionality is not something ontologically present *in rebus*, the proportionality artificially signifies a quantifiable correspondability of attributes (which would make it a metaphor of a metaphor, if correspondability itself is not ontologically present *in rebus*.)

So an analogy based on proportionality can only work if the analogates are proportional, which is to say, if the analogates have correspondable attributes. If the analogates have no correspondable attributes, then there cannot be any proportionality between them. This is the case with God and creatures, because God and creatures can have no correspondable attributes. What of the attribute of action? God can only have that predicated of him in the equivocal way Maimonides describes in the *Guide*, which makes his actions not correspondable with creatures in the sense we need for proportionality.

So must we abandon our attempt to make analogates a and c "similar"? If we were constrained by Maimonides's picture of relativity, we would have to, leaving the analogy to tell us only about how multiplicity can come from unity, with unity having two different referents, one for each analogate. But with our improved version of

relativity, in which X can be relative to Y without saying anything at all about Y's attributes, we will be able to strengthen the analogy.

Can we say that relativity is predicable of creatures to God in the same way that relativity is predicable of the knower to the known? Nothing is entailed about God, just as nothing is entailed about the known in such a relativity predication. The being of the known is in no way affected by the fact that it is known, but the being of the knower, *qua* knower, is certainly changed by the fact that it knows the known. If the known were in some way erased from the relativity predication, the being of the knower, *qua* knower, would also vanish. But if the being of the knower were eliminated from the relativity predication, the being of the known would be unaffected, because it remains unaffected throughout the relativity. That which is unchanged by being known certainly cannot suddenly be changed by ceasing to be known. The same seems to hold for the relativity predicable of creatures to God. God is "similar" to the known in this case, not because he is known, of course, but because God remains unchanged by the relativity predicable of creatures to him. If God were in some way erased from the relativity predication, creatures would surely be affected, because their being is contingent upon his necessary being. But if creatures were erased from the relativity predication, God would remain unchanged, because his necessary being is, by definition, not contingent upon another.

In what way is relativity predicable of creatures relative to God? Because all creatures have contingent being, in that they could "not be," they have a reliance upon God's necessary being, because he can not "not be." Is this Maimonides's idea? He as much as says that it is only through God's being that creation has being in Ch. 72.²¹ But of course he cannot actually say that relativity is predicable of contingent being to necessary being, because of the strictures he applied in Ch. 52. Now that we have loosened these bonds, the passage in Ch. 72 has more force.

What can we do with the analogy of Ch. 53 now? The major analogates, God's unity and man's unity, can be said to be predicably relative, though "disproportionate," meaning that there can be no correspondability of attributes between the two, because no attributes of God are available to us with regard to his unity. If we can find a similar relativity predicable between two other relata, perhaps the analogy can tell us more than how multiplicity can come from unity.

Consider the disproportionality between the being of substance and the being of accident.²² When substance is seen as a thing in the world,

²¹"In the same way there exists in being (i.e., contingent being) something that rules it as a whole and puts into motion its first principal part . . . For it is in virtue of this thing that the existence of the sphere (i.e., the firmament, or the Universe), and every part of it endures. This thing is the deity, may Its name be exalted." I. 72. 103b.

²²*Categories*, c. 5 (2b1, 2b10, 4a10), on the centrality of substance, especially 2b1,

it is a "being in itself." Aside from its anterior cause, through which it came into existence, the substance is an independent thing. It requires the being of no other thing for its continued substantial being. A simple stone, for example, after having come into being through sedimentation, or volcanic explosion, requires nothing else for its continued existence as a stone. But mottled pattern on the stone requires the stone's continued existence for its own existence. The stone does not need this mottled pattern for its own continued existence; another mottled pattern would do just as well, as would a striped pattern, or no pattern at all. But this mottled pattern has accidental being, or "being in another." Two sorts of being are evident in any substantial thing in the world, then: the substantial being of the object, and the being of the accidents that inhere in the substance, or "being in itself" and "being in another."

Is relativity predicable of accidental being to substantial being in the sense that relativity is predicable of man's unity to God's unity? While it may appear that some subtle shift has been made from unity-to-being-predication, no shift has been made. The focus of this question is whether "unity" relativity is the same kind of relativity as "being" relativity. It may help to remember that man's unity being composite entails a contingent being, in that man's essence is "given" existence from something already existing, while God's unity entails necessary being because his essence is pure Existence, though. The disproportionalities certainly seem to be of the same type, with the former being absolutely dependent on the being of the latter, while the being of the latter is essentially unchanged by the being of the former.

But this is not to say that any time you have an ordered pair (a, b), in which a has "being in itself" and b has "being in another," that you have this relativity predicable. If this were the case, any ordered pair could be said to be disproportionate and thus able to have this relativity predicated of it. Take, for example, the ordered pair (U.S.S. Lexington, the red of my beard). The Lexington is an artifice substance, thus, a "being in itself," not reliant on the being of anything else for its own continued existence. But the red of my beard needs my beard for its existence; it is accidental "being in another," and cannot be without the substantial being of my beard, and ultimately, me. This ordered pair exhibits the requisite disproportionality, but the predicable ontological grounds for the kind of relativity we are discussing just is not there.

These ontological grounds for relativity predication seem necessary, and if they are present, the requisite disproportionality entailed will also be. It appears to be the case that ontological grounds for this relativity predication are present between accidental and substantial

2b10, 4a10; *Metaphysics* V, c 7 (1017a19), sense of "accidental being"; V, c. 8 (1017b10-25), what is meant by "substance"; V, c. 30 (1025a13-20), what is meant by "accident"; VI, c. 2-4 (1026b5-1027b28) for absolute reliance of "accidental" on "substantial" being.

being, and so they are disproportionate in the same way that the contingent being of creatures is disproportionate to the necessary being of God.

My contention, then, is that every time we run across a relativity predicate of this sort, we will have a commensurate disproportionality entailed as well. And each correctly reached relative disproportionality will be able to be compared to the commensurate relative disproportionality of terms *a* and *c* in Maimonides's analogy, thus delineating the gulf between the being of God and the being of creatures, without saying anything about God's essence.

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